

JAPAN CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY NEWS

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THIS ISSUE

Because the August 15 issue was late in delivery, the editors have decided to omit the September 1 issue. We take up news of the Summer conferences in this, the September 15 issue. We are indebted to Mr. K. C. Hendricks, Mr. Vern Rossman, Mr. Howard Huff and Mr. Peyton Palmore for these articles.

SECOND EVANGELISTIC CONFERENCE OF NATIONAL CHRISTIAN COUNCIL

Following the First Evangelistic Conference of the National Christian Council, held last year, in September, at Amagi Sanso, and attended by about forty persons, the Second conference, held from August 27 to 29, 1958, at Shio-tsubo Hot Springs Hotel, Naka-Karuizawa, with more than double the attendance of the original conference, was a very important indication that the church bodies participating in the Centenary Movement sponsored by the NCC are eager to get as close together as their respective denominational tenets and practices will permit, in an all-out evangelistic approach to the people of Japan, and also a whole-hearted and effective support of the current movement toward world-wide Christian cooperation, through the Ecumenical mission.

JAPANESE CHRISTIAN ALPHABET

THE ALPHABET OF THE JAPANESE CHURCH

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Addresses by men of wide experience such as Dr. G. Baez-Camargo, of Mexico, who gave two messages on "The Trend in World Mission", Dr. Lawrence Lacour, very familiar with conditions in Japan, who spoke on "Unity and Evangelism", Dr. Paul Lindholm, of the Philippines, with a challenge to "Christian Stewardship Education", Dr. Takeshi Muto, Moderator of the United Church of Christ, on "Facing the New Century of Mission" accompanied by exciting and profitable discussion periods when time permitted, set the conference on a distinctly high plane of thought and fruitful potentiality. Ably chaired by Rev. Isamu Omura, and given stimulating spiritual tone by devotional leadership and messages by Dr. Michio Kozaki (Chairman of N. C. C.), Rev. T. Kubota, Chaplain N. Takuma (Rikkyo Univ.), Rev. R. Utsumi, Rev. K. Iwai, and Rev. K. Otani, and with discussion leadership by Rev. Ken Saeki, Rev. Atsumi Tasaka, and Rev. K. Shimamura, the conference was considered by all to have been a truly history-making event. Much credit for the effectiveness of the meeting in spite of bi-lingual necessities goes to the interpreters, Dr. S. Yasumura, and Rev. C. Yamada.

The Conference findings Committee prepared a significant Statement, which, after thorough consideration on the floor of the conference, was unanimously adopted.

Statement

In this Second Conference on Evangelism, with the theme, "Mission and Unity", we have, through the collaboration of able leaders from at home and abroad, come anew to the conviction that to-day's mission can be accomplished only through oneness in the Lord. In the concluding year of the Centenary Movement, in this spirit, and along the lines of the three points hereinafter stated, we desire to realize epochal activity in mission as we go forward into the second century of the evangelization of Japan.

1. All of the member churches, each following its own characteristic program of evangelism, shall mutually contribute to a powerful advance of mission in this last year of the century.
2. Cooperative evangelism, under direction of the Commission on Evangelization, shall be carried forward, through the local Christian Councils, and serve also the evangelistic activities of the various Church bodies. In this connection the positive cooperation of the three Operational Commissions (Literature, Church School, Audio-visual) is expected.

3. On the occasion of the Centennial Week (November 1 to 7, 1959) of which the Commemoration Exercises (November 3) will be the focus, let there be also a program of events that shall rally all Christians and at the same time be the means of bringing Christ to the attention of the people in general.

ASIA COMMUNICATIONS CONFERENCE MAKES IMPORTANT DECISIONS

Fifty-three delegates and twenty observers, representing thirteen Asian and six other countries, met at the Christian Audio Visual Center August 2-6 in the Second All Asia Conference on Mass Communication. AVACO played host to the historic gathering as Mathew Ogawa of AVACO served as Chairman of the Conference and Vern Rossman, his associate, as Secretary.

Asian countries sending official delegates included: Burma, Ceylon, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaya, East Pakistan, West Pakistan, the Philippines, Taiwan and Thailand. Important observers included, Mr. Authur Lomas, AV Secretary of the World Council of Christian Education and Mr. David W. Lomax, Director of the Christian Overseas AV Centre of London; pastor H. W. von Meyenn of the Evangelische Presshaus in Germany; Rev. Edwin M. Luidens, Executive Secretary of the Radio Audio Visual Education, Mass Communication Commission of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the U. S. A.; and Dr. and Mrs. Harry Spencer of the Radio-TV Department of the American Methodist Churches. Mrs. Helen Saulsbury, special assistant to the Executive of RAVEMCCO, attended and was honored with a Japanese doll and scroll of appreciation for her gift of a Hammond organ to the AVACO studios.

Five Study Areas

The conference studied five areas of work: radio and television; projected materials; non-projected materials; leadership training; and general problems of strategy. Representatives from radio and audio visual committees of the national Christian councils of the Asian countries each presented an individual report. Then, on Monday, August fourth, the conference divided into five working groups along the lines mentioned above. Each working group returned a report to the whole conference. These reports were studied, revised and approved on Tuesday.

Evening Demonstrations

Evenings were given over to demonstrations. Radio programs from the Christian station of Korea and the Philippines were heard along with productions of other countries like Japan where the programs are produced on tape and broadcast over government or private stations.

Various countries also demonstrated films, filmstrips, and non-projected materials produced by their committees. Japan, India and the Philippines led in production with significant work also being done in Korea and Burma.

On Tuesday evening Japan demonstrated various equipment developments of importance including the AVACO-developed kerosene projector, a magnastripe sound adaptor for 16 m.m. filmstrip projector.

Leadership

Devotional messages opened and closed each day with Dr. G. P. Charles and Rev. Jose Yap, Executive secretaries, respectively, of the Burmese and Philippine national councils of churches, as official chaplains.

Short keynote addresses were delivered the first day, in each of the five areas of study, by Dr. Henry Mack (station DYSR, Philippines), Mr. David Lomax (OAVC, London), Mr. Solomon Saprid (Philippines), Mr. Mathew Ogawa (AVACO), and Rev. Edwin Luidens (RAVEMCCO).

Important Actions

After the close of the conference the morning of Wednesday, August 6th, was given over to a meeting of the Continuation Committee, composed of one representative from each country. This committee transacted the business of the conference, including significant actions:

1. An Asia Office for information exchange and the coordination of planning and production for Asia as a region was set up with headquarters in Japan. Mr. Ogawa and Rev. Rossman of AVACO were designated Director and Associate Director, respectively. A budget of twenty-five hundred dollars was set up for 1959 with the first thousand to be raised from contributions by the various radio and AV committees represented.
2. The Southeast Asia Radio Plan was placed as first priority by the committee for promotional emphasis as the next step in radio outreach in Asia. This involves the adding of powerful shortwave transmitters to station DYSR in Dumaguete City in the Philippines for broadcasting the Christian message to such countries as Hong Kong and China, Indonesia, Burma, Thailand, Borneo, etc.

3. It was voted that conversations should be opened immediately with the Secretariat of the East Asia Christian Conference, Asian regional cooperative agency relating to the World Council of Churches and International Missionary Council, to move toward a closer relationship in terms of work, fellowship and organization.
4. The officers of the new continuation committee were elected as follows: Dr. Charles of Burma, Chairman; Mr. Constantino Bernazez of the Philippines, Vice-Chairman; Bishop Gabriel Sundaram of India, Secretary-Treasurer; and Mr. Lie Tjie Kiet of Indonesia, Assistant Secretary-Treasurer. A place was opened on the committee as ex-officio members for the executive of RAVEMCCO and one member of the Secretariat of the East Asia Christian Conference.
5. The next meeting of the conference on mass communication was tentatively planned for 1951 in Burma.
6. The membership of the committee was enlarged to include Taiwan, Okinawa, Australia and New Zealand.

SECOND EAST ASIA CHRISTIAN LITERATURE CONFERENCE

The Sanmaiso Hotel in Hakone-Yumoto was the site of the Second East Asia Christian Literature Conference. Fourteen countries of East Asia sent representatives and observers from their churches. The total number in attendance was 65. In line with the 14th World Christian Education Convention held in Tokyo just before it, the Literature Convention met from August 15 through 21 to consider seriously how to produce the literature needed for the Christian education of the rising generation.

The opening day of the conference revealed that people had come hoping to deal with the whole field of Christian literature and not primarily curriculum materials. Furthermore the phrase "rising generation", when applied to East Asia, had to be interpreted to mean more than the burgeoning youth population of these countries; it was taken to refer also to the determination of Asian peoples to lift themselves and assume a new position in the world.

As discussions proceeded, it was mentioned on various occasions how hard it is to bring Church leaders to see that literature and other communications media are indispensable to effective Christian witness and evangelism. The group deplored its own remoteness from the thinking of Church leaders but stressed equally the necessity of the Churches to bring the matter of effective literature preparation into their own thinking, planning and budgeting.

Speakers at the conference were Dr. Floyd Shacklock, former Director of the Japan Christian Literature Commission and presently Secretary of the Commission on Christian Literature and World Literacy of the NCCC-USA; the Rev. Wilfred Scopes, Literature Secretary of the NCC of India; Mr. Yasuhiro Owaku, Secretary for Student Work, Japan National YMCA; and the Rev. F. P. D. Penning, General Secretary of the Christian Literature Society in Madras, India.

Group discussions were held in six areas: Training of Personnel, Types of Literature, Periodical Production, and Literature for Children, Youth, and for Adults and the Family.

The impact of these group studies led to a decision to get together more often in smaller Asian areas in order to focus in detail on things of mutual concern. The need for co-operative sharing of talent and techniques also contributed to this decision to form the nations represented into three clusters. The North East Asia cluster would be Korea, Taiwan, Japan and Okinawa. Malay, Hong Kong, Philippines, Sarawak, Indonesia, Australia and New Zealand would be clustered together as South East Asia. Burma, Thailand, Nepal, East and West Pakistan, India, and Ceylon would constitute the South Asian cluster. The Executive Director of the Japan Christian Literature Commission, the Rev. Mr. Ebizawa, was made convener for the North East Asian cluster. It is hoped that these clusters can also serve in a consultative way to the East Asian Christian Conference. Mr. U Kyaw Than, Administrative Secretary for the East Asia Christian Conference was a prominent participant in the conference.

FELLOWSHIP OF CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES CONFERENCE

Meeting under the theme "Toward Maturity", 125 missionaries registered and many more attended the sessions of the Annual Conference of the Fellowship of Christian Missionaries in Nojiri, July 29-31. The highlight of the conference was the Conference Addresses given by Dr. Carl Michalson who is professor of systematic Theology at Drew University, N.J., USA, and who has been Guest Professor at Aoyama Gakuin, Tokyo during the past spring.

Dr. Michalson related the Christian Faith to the problems of Anxiety and of Guilt as experienced so widely in modern society. By analyzing these problems with the tools of the psychologist, Dr. Michalson led the group to a deeper understanding of how these emotions arise, how people adjust to them, and how our faith acts, perhaps not to eliminate them but at least to make them livable. Many missionaries working with people within the context of a different culture found this approach to the application of the Good News both refreshing and helpful.

The Centennial Planning Committee which had been selected the previous year was appointed as the Executive Committee for this coming year. The Rev. Mr. James Cogswell, Southern Presbyterian missionary working in Nagoya, was elected as the Chairman. The Conference accepted the recommendation of the Centennial Planning Committee that the 1959 Centennial Celebration meeting be held during the summer at International Christian University in Tokyo where many missionaries can be accommodated at a central location.

In terms of policy planning for the future, there was a widely felt need for more fellowship meetings among missionaries on local levels. To encourage this, provisions were made in the budget to subsidize area meetings in Hokkaido, Kanto, Kansai, and Kyushu. Other areas are also encouraged to have fellowship meetings, and to participate in the writing and reading of the F. C. M. official organ, THE JAPAN CHRISTIAN QUARTERLY. (available through the Kyobunkwan in Tokyo).

